



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
NORTHEAST REGION
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

June 27, 2007

-EXTENSION OF EMERGENCY PSP CLOSURE-

Dear Federal Permit Holder or Dealer:

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has requested a continuance of the emergency regulations of October 18, 2005, which implemented a temporary paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP) closure (i.e. Temporary PSP Closure Area) due to the presence of high levels of the toxin that causes PSP. *See chart of the closure area on the reverse side.* **This action extends the current closure through December 31, 2007.** If warranted, the emergency regulations may be terminated at an earlier date by publication in the Federal Register of a notice of termination.

The northern component of the Temporary PSP Closure Area prohibits all bivalve molluscan shellfish fishing, with the exception of sea scallop adductor muscles harvested and shucked at sea. The northern component of the Temporary PSP Closure Area includes all Federal waters bound by the following coordinates in the order stated: (1) 43°00' N. lat., 71°00' W. long.; (2) 43°00' N. lat., 69°00' W. long.; (3) 41°39' N. lat., 69°00' W. long.; (4) 41°39' N. lat., 71°00' W. long., and then ending at the first point.

The southern component of the Temporary PSP Closure Area prohibits only the harvest of whole or roe-on scallops. The southern component of the Temporary PSP Closure Area includes all Federal waters bound by the following coordinates in the order stated: (1) 41°39' N. lat., 69°00' W. long.; (2) 41°39' N. lat., 71°00' W. long.; (3) 40°00' N. lat., 69°00' W. long.; (4) 40°00' N. lat., 71°00' W. long., and then ending at the first point. This is necessary because scallop viscera and roe can retain PSP toxins longer than other species of molluscan shellfish. This temporary rule will expire after December 31, 2007, unless otherwise rescinded by the Regional Administrator.

A copy of the final emergency rule is available at NMFS's Northeast Regional Office Web Site: <http://www.nero.noaa.gov>. If you have any questions on this continuation of the emergency action, please call Brian Hooker at (978) 281-9220.

Sincerely,

Patricia A. Kurkul
Regional Administrator

This small entity compliance guide complies with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Fairness Act of 1996.



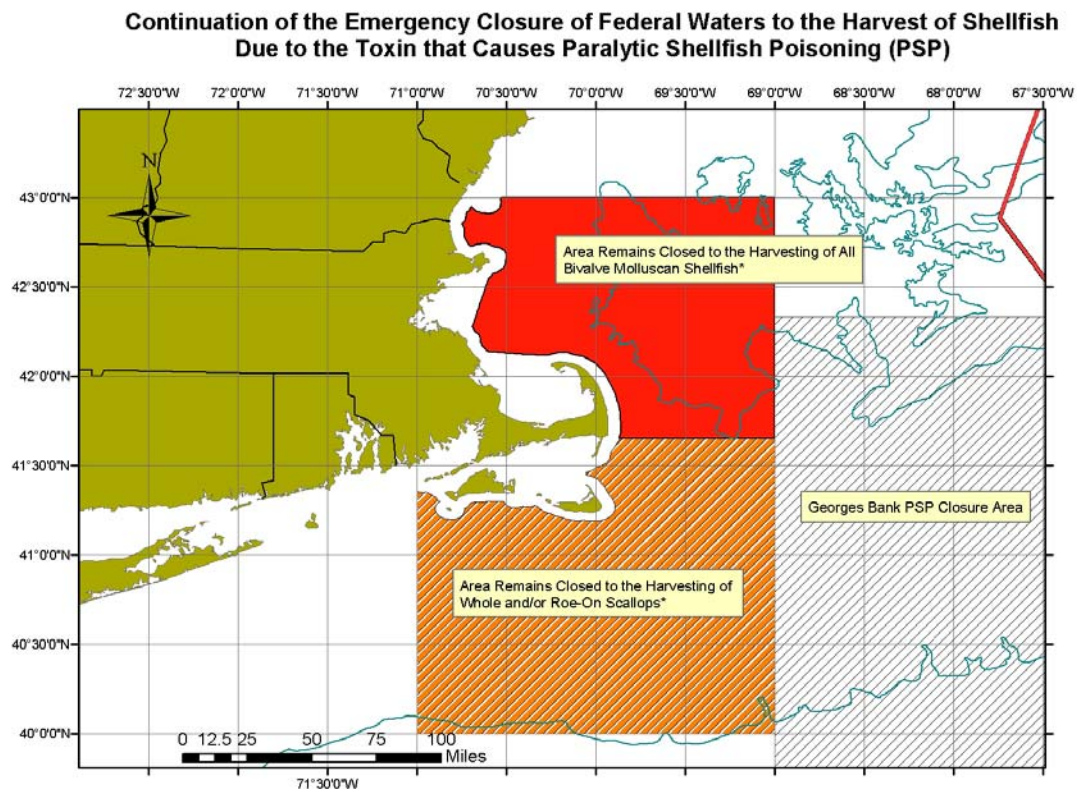
Coordinates of Temporary PSP Closure Area

Original PSP Closure (remains in effect for whole and roe-on Atlantic sea scallops)

- (1) 43°00' N. lat., 71°00' W. long.;
- (2) 43°00' N. lat., 69°00' W. long.;
- (3) 40°00' N. lat., 69°00' W. long.;
- (4) 40°00' N. lat., 71°00' W. long., and
- (5) then ending at the first point.

Portion of the Temporary PSP Closure Area re-opened on Sept. 9, 2005 (for harvesting of Atlantic surf clams and ocean quahogs)

- (1) 41°39' N. lat., 69°00' W. long.;
- (2) 41°39' N. lat., 71°00' W. long.;
- (3) 40°00' N. lat., 71°00' W. long.;
- (4) 40°00' N. lat., 69°00' W. long., and
- (5) then ending at the first point.





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June 28, 2007

Dear Federal Permit Holder:

This is to advise you that there is a significant Harmful Algal Bloom in the vicinity of Georges Bank. Fishermen are warned not to eat shellfish taken as bycatch in the Georges Bank area, including mussels, surf clams, ocean quahogs, moon snails and whelks and any part of sea scallops other than the meat (adductor muscle). Eating these species taken from the vicinity of Georges Bank could be dangerous and is a risk to human health. This warning applies to cooked as well as raw shellfish, because the toxin is not broken down by normal cooking temperatures.

The research vessel R/V Endeavor from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute has now completed two surveys of the abundance of the harmful alga *Alexandrium* on Georges Bank. In May, the Endeavor found *Alexandrium* concentrations in excess of 1000 cells per liter covered most of the Bank. In the most recent survey, completed this week, surface counts indicate that cell concentrations on Georges Bank have dropped somewhat, although there were several stations with thousands of cells per liter and a peak concentration near 10,000 cells per liter.

Alexandrium species are known to produce paralytic shellfish poison (PSP), which becomes concentrated in filter feeding shellfish like mussels and clams and in the organisms that feed on the shellfish. PSP has no taste and can be fatal. The first signs of paralytic shellfish poisoning, which usually appear within a few hours of consuming contaminated food, are tingling and numbness of the tongue and lips, often accompanied by nausea, dizziness and headache. Numbness and paralysis may spread to the arms and legs. In severe cases, breathing becomes difficult, which can lead to death. At the first signs of poisoning, the victim should immediately seek medical advice and aid.

Permit holders are reminded that current restrictions still apply on the commercial harvesting of shellfish on Georges Bank and in waters around Massachusetts due to the risk of PSP. A map of the current closures is attached to this message.

For further information, please contact Paul DiStefano at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration Division of Seafood Safety, 301-436-1410, or Brian Hooker NMFS (978-281-9220).

Sincerely,

Chris Mantzaris
Deputy Regional Administrator

